

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8160

INFO AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY

UNCLAS ALGIERS 0763

CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, MILI, SS

SUBJ: SAHARA: SAHRAOUI REPUBLIC'S SECOND ANNIVERSARY

REF: ALGIERS 0062

1. ON FEB 27, SAHRAOUI REPUBLIC COMMEMORATED SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF ITS CREATION WITH MAJOR CELEBRATION "SOMEWHERE IN THE DESERT" THREE HOURS OUTSIDE TINDOUF. ACCORDING TO ALGERIAN PRESS, PROCEEDINGS ATTENDED BY 60 DELEGATIONS FROM EUROPE, AFRICA, ASIA AND LATIN AMERICA. TOTAL FOREIGN PARTICIPATION, APPARENTLY INCLUDING JOURNALISTS, PUT AT 400.

2. HARD CORE OF GOVTS SUPPORTING SAHRAOUI REPUBLIC SENT DELEGATIONS TO CEREMONY. THESE INCLUDED ANGOLA, MOZAMBIQUE (BOTH REPRESENTED BY FONMINS), MADAGASCAR, GUINEA BISSAU, BENIN, TOGO, MEXICO, TANZANIA AND CUBA. VIET NAM AND NORTH KOREA WERE REPRESENTED BY UNCLASSIFIED

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THEIR AMBASSADORS, ALGIERS, AND LIBYA SENT ENVOY FROM TRIPOLI.

THERE WERE ALSO DELEGATIONS FROM ITALIAN, BELGIAN, PORTUGUESE AND FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTIES PRESENT, AND FROM WIDE POLITICAL PARTIES AND SAHRAOUI FRIENDSHIP SOCIETIES FROM MOST OF WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, PLUS ARGENTINA. LIBERATION MOVEMENTS, PARTICULARLY FROM AFRICA, ALSO PRESENT IN FORCE, AS WERE SOME EASTERN EUROPEANS.

3. DAY'S PROGRAM INCLUDED MAJOR SPEECH BY MOHAMED ABDELAZIZ WHO IS SECY GEN OF POLISARIO AND HEAD OF REVOLUTIONARY COMMAND COUNCIL. MOHAMED ABDELAZIZ APPEARED TO BE CENTRAL FIGURE IN FESTIVITIES, ALTHOUGH SAHRAOUI PRIME MINISTER LAMINE AMINE MET WITH PRESS. MALEK'S SPEECH BARELY REPORTED IN OFFICIAL PRESS. OTHER EVENTS WERE MILITARY PARADE FEATURING SAHRAOUI POPULAR LIBERATION ARMY TROOPS SMARTLY DECKED OUT IN FATIGUES, BUNTING AND KALASHNIKOV'S, AND VARIETY OF VEHICLES AND WEAPONS, INCLUDING CAPTURED U.S. GMC TRUCKS AND RECOILLESS RIFLE ARMED JEEPS. VISITORS WERE ALSO INVITED TO VIEW APPARENTLY LARGE DISPLAY OF CAPTURED SMALL ARMS AND AMUNITION AS WELL AS MOROCCAN AND MAURITANIAN PRISONERS, AND TELEVISION COVERAGE OF EVENT CONCLUDED WITH SAHRAOUI FOLK DANCING AND SINGING BY REFUGEE CAMP WOMEN. LATTER SERVED AS NOISY CLIQUE THROUGHOUT PROCEEDINGS.

4. ON-THE-SCENE OBSERVERS SHARE OUR IMPRESSION THAT OVERALL ORGANIZATION OF CEREMONY, PARTICULARLY MILITARY PARADE, WAS MORE IMPRESSIVE AND BETTER ORGANIZED THAN LAST YEAR, ALTHOUGH ALL WONDER IF POLISARIO FIGHTERS HAVE FORESAKEN TRADITIONAL DRESS FOR FATIGUES WHEN THEY CONDUCT OPERATIONS. AT SAME TIME, HOWEVER, ALGERIAN FAILURE TO PUBLICIZE IN FULL NAMES OF FOREIGN DELEGATES AND ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTED SUGGESTS THAT WILLINGNESS OF EXPRESS SUPPORT FOR POLISARIO CAUSE HAS NOT GROWN AS MUCH AS GOA WOULD HAVE LIKED.

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